FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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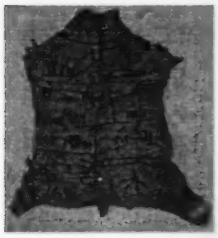
PIECE OF MEDICINE HAT'S HISTORY SELECTED FOR INTERNATIONAL EXHIBIT IN BELGIUM

Blackfoot Robe Travels to Ieper, Belgium Tuesday

Medicine Hat – The Esplanade Arts and Heritage Centre is proud to announce that one of the Museum's artefacts has been selected to travel to Belgium on Tuesday as part of a high profile international exhibition.

In July 2007, The ***In Flanders Fields Museum*** in Ieper (Ypres), Belgium contacted the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC) seeking Canadian artefacts that highlight the multicultural contributions during the First World War. The CMC was aware of this particular artefact in the Esplanade's collection and put the ***In Flanders Fields Museum*** in touch.



The artefact is a unique Blackfoot calf-hide robe from the early 20th century, which, in the tradition of the Blackfoot, records the deeds of a warrior in battle.

In this case, the warrior is Corporal Mike Mountain Horse of the 50th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force, and the battles depicted are from World War One.

This valuable and irreplaceable artefact will be part of the ***Man Culture War: Multicultural Aspects of the First World War*** exhibit at the In Flanders Fields Museum in Belgium from May to September this year.

Museum staff have spent the last nine months preparing the robe for travel and securing insurance, travel permits and transportation. A specially designed crate has been built to ensure the piece is protected as it is trucked and flown to Belgium.

Museum Assistant Tim McShane will accompany the robe to Belgium to ensure the crate is handled properly and to evaluate the condition of the artefact when it arrives in Ieper to detect any damage it might have suffered in transit, and to instruct the Belgian museum staff in how to handle Blackfoot material.

"It's not only our job to collect and preserve the history of Medicine Hat and area, but when possible, to share it with others – in this case the world," says Donny White, Curator of Cultural History at the Esplanade Museum. "And it's also an opportunity to share with our residents the value and care we place on preserving their history."

The last time a piece was sought out and selected from the Esplanade Museum collection was in the 1980s when the Museum sent a leaded window from the 1889 hospital to the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, DC.

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NOTE: Mr. McShane will be available for comment until 4:30 p.m. Monday, before leaving for Belgium on Tuesday.
For further information, please contact:

Timothy McShane
Museum Assistant
Esplanade Museum
403.502.8587
timmcs@medicinehat.ca

Terra Rogowski
Cultural Promotions Assistant
City of Medicine Hat
403.502.8786
terrog@medicinehat.ca

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